DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 206 100 EA 013 879

TITLE Units of Credit: OAR 581-22-316. Standards Guidelines.
INSTITUTION Oregon State Dept. of Education, Salem.
PUB DATE Jun 80
NOTE 25p.: For related document, see EA 013 880.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Credits; Educational Policy; *Graduation Requirements; High Schools; School Districts; School Law; *State Standards
IDENTIFIERS *Oregon

ABSTRACT

In light of revised standards for Oregon's public elementary and secondary schools, this manual suggests guidelines for school districts to follow in implementing new state rules regarding high school graduation requirements. The manual gives particular attention to the new rule concerning unit of credit requirements. An excerpt from the new state regulation first lists the subjects and numbers of credits required for graduation. The document then discusses the implementation schedule for the new rule, as well as credits in specified and elective areas, waivers, and statements of course plans. Sample policies and procedures are included on credit units, alternative learning options, off-campus experiences, credit by examination, and independent study. An appendix gives the full text of the regulation on graduation requirements. (RW)

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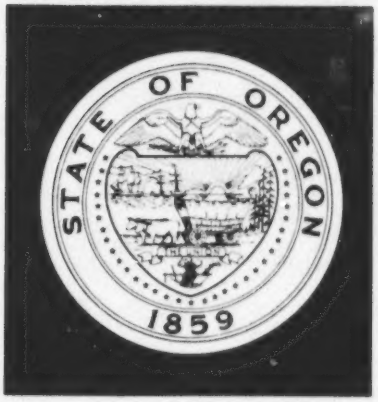

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EA 013 879

Standards Guidelines

UNITS OF CREDIT
OAR 581-22-316

June 1980

Oregon Department of Education
700 Pringle Parkway SE
Salem, Oregon 97310

FOREWORD

In February the State Board of Education adopted revised standards for Oregon's public elementary and secondary schools. For the most part, the changes reflect a need for more precision and clarity learned from several years' experience with these Oregon Administrative Rules.

The guidelines on the following pages address OAR 581-22-316, Graduation Requirements; more specifically, they look at issues surrounding the unit of credit requirements. Please keep in mind that the guidelines were developed in response to pressing questions from districts, and will receive further refinement as we gain more experience in the area of credit requirements. Districts are free to use or modify the suggestions in these guidelines to best suit local needs.

Department of Education guidelines which speak to other standards issues include:

The High School Diploma and Alternative Awards

Competence Requirements

Selecting Textbooks

Questions should be directed to the Department of Education, 378-3569, or toll free in Oregon 1-800-452-7813.

Verne A. Duncan
State Superintendent
of Public Instruction

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The Standard

Graduation Requirements

581-22-316 Each district school board with jurisdiction over high school programs shall award diplomas to all students who fulfill all school district requirements and all state requirements as described in the following sections and in district school board policies. A school district may award an alternative document to a student who has met some but not all of the graduation requirements.

(1) Unit of Credit Requirements

(a) Each student shall earn a minimum of 21 units of credit to include at least:

(A) Language Arts—3 (shall include the equivalent of 1 unit in Written Composition)
(B) Mathematics—1
(C) Science—1
(D) U.S. History—1
(E) Global Studies—1
(F) Government—1/2
(G) Health Education—1
(H) Physical Education—1
(I) Career Development—1/2
(J) Personal Finance and Economics—1
(K) Applied Arts, Fine Arts or Foreign Language—1 (one unit shall be earned in any one or a combination).

(b) A district school board with a three-year high school may submit through the waiver process alternative plans to meet unit requirements.

(c) A district school board may increase the number of units required in specific areas, and may increase or decrease the number of elective units; however, the total units of credit required for graduation shall not be less than 21.

(d) A school district may grant high school credit for experiences prior to the ninth grade which are equivalent to high school courses within the school district; however, the granting of such credit cannot reduce below 21 the units of credit to be completed in grades 9 through 12.

(e) Planned course statements shall be written for courses in grades 9 through 12 and shall be available to students, staffs, parents, the district school board and other interested individuals....

Implementation Schedule

The graduating class of 1984 will be the first which must meet all credit requirements called for in the 1980 revised Standards for Public Schools. School districts should be aware of the changes from the 1976 standards so that they are prepared to provide students with the necessary instruction. For example, of the three units of credit required in language arts, the 1984 graduate will need to earn the equivalent of one unit of credit in written composition. It follows that schools will need to offer written composition to the class of 1984 no later than September 1, 1983.

(See page 23 for the entire rule.)

Units of Credit in Specified Areas

Students must earn a minimum of 21 units of credit in order to graduate. A unit of credit is equivalent to at least 130 hours of instruction, or a one-year course consisting of one class period a day, at least 45 minutes in length. At least 12 units must be earned in specified subject areas, but districts may increase this number.

Units of Credit in Electives

Districts may increase or decrease the number of elective units as long as the total units of credit required for graduation is not less than 21. Consideration of student interests and needs, community resources, staff qualifications, equipment and facilities will help districts determine the course offerings that can and should be made available to students. Students should be encouraged to work closely with parents and with school counselors in selecting electives where students can explore personal and career interests.

From 1976 to 1980

The differences between the 1976 and 1980 standards as they relate to credit are shown in Table 1 below and discussed further on the following pages.

TABLE 1

Comparison of 1976 and 1980 Credit Requirements Standards for Public Schools

1976 Standards Credit Requirements	Units	Units	1980 Standards Credit Requirements
Language Arts/English	3	3	Language Arts (include equivalent of 1 unit in written composition)
Mathematics	1	1	Mathematics
Science	1	1	Science
Social Studies/History	1	1	U.S. History
		1	Global Studies
Citizenship/Government	1	1/2	Government
Health Education	1	1	Health Education
Physical Education	1	1	Physical Education
Career Education	1	1/2	Career Development
Consumer Education/Economics/ Personal Finance	1	1	Personal Finance and Economics
		1	Applied Arts, Fine Arts, or Foreign Language
Electives	10	9	Electives
Total Units of Credit	21	21	Total Units of Credit

Language Arts--Written Composition: Credit for one unit in written composition may be accumulated from more than one course. It may be earned in courses specifically designed to develop and practice writing skills, or it may be earned through a set of courses where only a part of the curriculum is involved in writing improvement. However organized, the total time a student spends in developing writing skills must be equivalent to at least one year of instruction (130 clock hours).

U.S. History: Courses developed for this area should present a comprehensive study of national development, from colonial times to the present. Instruction may be organized chronologically, or it could be organized around major concepts which show how events and personalities (including minorities and women) have helped to shape the development of the nation.

Global Studies: Students should learn about the history and cultures of peoples of the world, drawing upon history, geography and other social studies disciplines. Instruction could be organized around some major themes: the diversity of cultures, the interdependence of cultures, how the forces of change and trends illuminate prevailing world conditions.

Government: Students should learn about the constitutional and legal structure of local, state and national government; the effect of customs and tradition on the evolution of government; and the rights and responsibilities of its citizens. When possible, students should be encouraged to come to know about government through first-hand participation.

Career Development: Students were previously required to earn one unit of credit in career education; this has been changed to one-half unit of credit in career development. In career development students should explore personal interests and aptitudes toward the development of career goals. The district may utilize a combination of options, such as allowing students to explore a number of careers through various courses, independent study, and outside work experience.

Personal Finance and Economics: The 1976 standard allowed districts the option of providing instruction in one or more content areas of personal finance, economics, or consumer education. The present rule requires instruction in both personal finance and economics. The assignment of time for each content area is left to the local district and may be met in one course or more than one course. The total time, however, must be equivalent to at least one year of instruction.

Applied Arts, Fine Arts, or Foreign Language: Students must earn one unit of credit in any one or a combination of applied arts, fine arts, or foreign language.

Applied Arts options include: business education, home economics (child care, clothing construction, foods and nutrition, institution or home management), industrial arts, or a vocational program approved by the state (one of 14 occupational cluster areas or a more specific course of study). For schools with small enrollments: schools may share teachers; students may attend other institutions in the area (e.g., community college); teachers may be retrained; industry people may be hired part-time, or students may be assigned to a local industry for on-site training.

Fine Arts options include: band, choir, orchestra, guitar, keyboard, performance lab, music theory, music and art history or appreciation, drawing, painting, sculpture, drama and dance. For schools with small enrollments: schools may share teachers; students may attend other institutions in the area (community college); incentives may be provided to encourage additional training of current staff.

A district must have one Foreign Language program for one or more students who wish to study foreign language. For schools with small enrollments: schools may wish to hire teachers who speak several languages; schools may share teachers; students may attend other institutions in the area or may enroll in OEPBS foreign language programs or correspondence courses (monitored); incentives may be provided to encourage additional training of current staff.

Waivers

Using the waiver process (OAR 581-22-802) district school boards with three-year high schools may submit alternative plans to meet unit of credit requirements. All high schools are encouraged to coordinate their curriculum with "feeder" schools.

Planned Course Statements

These statements must be written for courses in grades nine through twelve. They are to be made available to students, staff, parents, the district school board and other interested citizens. Schools are encouraged to place copies in the library media center, school office and other accessible areas.

Planned course statements are to include a course title, course overview, course goals (including career-related goals) and, where appropriate, competence requirements assigned to the course for verification.

In addition, planned course statements also may include such information as: course numbers, length of course, availability of credit by examination, performance indicators associated with course goals, assessment and evaluation procedures, lists of learning activities used in the course, prerequisite requirements.

Planned course statements serve:

- As a tool for planning classroom instruction
- To provide a concise and accurate reference source for curriculum coordination, planning and evaluation
- To inform students of course requirements in advance of taking the course
- To assist the student in making a selection among numerous course options
- To guide the student in completing course requirements
- To communicate course content and requirements to parents and other interested citizens

Units of Credit Before Grade 9

A district may grant a student high school credit prior to grade nine for experiences which are equivalent to high school courses within the school district. Even if such credit is granted, the student must complete at least 21 units of credit in grades nine through twelve.

Example:

A seventh grade student is permitted to enroll in a ninth grade mathematics course for one unit of credit. Upon satisfactory completion of the course, the student has met the state and local credit requirements for one unit of mathematics which must now be recorded on a school transcript. Upon beginning high school, the student must still complete 21 units of credit in grades nine through twelve but need not meet any further mathematics credit requirements.

Policies and Procedures

Units of Credit

Alternative Learning Experiences

Off-Campus Experience

Credit by Examination

Independent Study

Reminder:

The samples on the following pages are suggestions only; districts may alter them to best serve local conditions.

SAMPLE
POLICY--UNITS OF CREDIT

UNITS OF CREDIT

A. Authority

"A district school board may increase or decrease the number of units required in specific areas, and may increase or decrease the number of elective units; however, the total units of credit required for graduation shall not be less than 21." (OAR 581-22-316(1))

B. Definition

Unit of Credit: 130 clock hours of instruction in a planned offering. Fractional parts of credit may be allowed for quarter-unit blocks. The minimum clock hour requirements may be waived pursuant to other provisions of the district's graduation requirements contained under policy number _____.

Units of Credit in Electives: Units of credit in other than specific areas of study listed in state standards and school district policy. Such learning experiences should be designed to meet the needs and interests of students and restricted only by available resources.

Units of Credit in Specified Areas: The units of credit other than electives. More particularly, those units specified by state standards and school district policy, including the areas of study defined below.

Language Arts: Enables students to receive and send communication by developing the ability to listen, speak, read and write.

Mathematics: Develops the skills and interests of students in computation and problem solving.

Science: Develops concept understandings and process skills as they relate to science.

U.S. History: Presents a comprehensive study of national development, from colonial times to the present.

Global Studies: Designed for learning about the people and cultures of the world through history, geography and other social studies disciplines.

Government: The study of local, state and national government, including the role of the citizen in a democratic society.

Health Education: Develops decision-making skills and a personal philosophy as related to healthful living.

Physical Education: Enables each student to build and maintain physical powers, skills and understanding necessary for optimum development.

Career Development: The exploration of personal interests and abilities with regard to career selection, and the development of tentative career goals.

Personal Finance and Economics: Enables students to learn about financial concerns as a consumer, including employment and income, money management, credit, purchase of goods and services, and the rights and responsibilities of the marketplace. Basic economic concepts and tools of economic analysis are integral to instruction.

Applied Arts, Fine Arts, or Foreign Language:

Applied Arts relate to the design and fabrication of functional objects and the acquisition of practical skills (e.g., business education, home economics, industrial arts and vocational education).

Fine Arts are more aesthetic in nature, including music, visual arts, drama, dance and art appreciation.

Foreign Language instruction helps students learn to communicate in languages other than their own.

C. Rationale

Units of credit in specific areas of study and in electives should provide planned instruction aimed at assisting the students at becoming lifelong learners, functioning effectively when confronted with situations which call for the ability to: communicate effectively, apply mathematics, function as a citizen, understand society in both global and national terms, employ scientific knowledge, demonstrate knowledge of mental health, demonstrate physical fitness, function as a consumer, prepare for a career, and function as an individual.

D. Procedures

Each student shall complete the following units of credit as specified:

Language Arts/Written Composition (3 units)--One unit of credit in grade nine and one unit of credit in grade ten with one-half unit of each year's work spent in meeting writing program requirements. In addition, one unit of credit in grades ten through twelve.

Mathematics (2 units)*--Two units of credit with one unit in grade nine and one unit in grades ten through twelve.

*Additional 1 unit is by district option.

Science (1 and 1/2 units)*--One and one-half units of credit in grades nine through twelve, with at least one-half unit in grade nine.

U.S. History (1 unit)--One unit of credit in grades ten through twelve.

Global Studies (1 unit)--One unit of credit in grades eleven and twelve.

Government (1/2 unit)--One-half unit of credit in grades nine through twelve.

Health Education (1 unit)--One-half unit of credit in grade nine and one-half unit of credit in grades ten through twelve.

Physical Education (1 unit)--One-half unit of credit in grade nine and one-half unit of credit in grades ten through twelve.

Career Development (1/2 unit)--One-half unit of credit in grades nine through twelve.

Personal Finance & Economics (1 unit)--One unit of credit in grades eleven and twelve.

Applied Arts, Fine Arts, Foreign Language (1 unit)--One unit of credit in grades nine through twelve.

Electives (8 and 1/2 units)--Eight and one-half units of credit in grades nine through twelve.

Total units of credit required for graduation equal 22.

Each building principal or designee shall administer the offerings which fulfill the units of credit required for graduation including:

- Determination of the offerings
- Enrollment of the students
- Determination of those requirements needed for compliance with Oregon Administrative Rules, school board policy and other school district administrative guidelines contained in policies _____
- Determination of the amount of credit to be granted (in multiples of quarter units)
- Recording of the credit granted
- Development and publication of precise written procedures for granting units of credit.

*Additional 1/2 unit is by district option.

SAMPLE
POLICY--ALTERNATIVE
LEARNING EXPERIENCES

OTHER EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMS

A. Authority — "The district school board may adopt policies for alternative learning experiences, ..." (OAR 581-22-316(3)).

B. Definition — Over the years the district has allowed students to enroll and obtain credit through a variety of alternatives such as approved summer school, evening school, or college courses.

C. Rationale — Increasingly diverse learning opportunities for students now make it possible for students to complete high school requirements in ways best suited to their particular interests and needs. Other educational programs can provide valuable learning experiences for students. In some instances, other educational institutions offer training experiences not available in the district, and this program is meant to provide an opportunity for students to enroll in such institutions when it is in the student's best interest.

D. Procedures — Other educational programs include:

1. Summer School

a. Summer high school:

Classes meet for two hours per evening, five days per week, for a period of three weeks to earn 5 term hours of credit.

All students, in addition to the 30 hours of classroom time, will be required to do outside written and/or project work equivalent to 14 classroom hours. This will result in a total of 44 hours for each term

To earn a full unit of credit, the student must attend all three terms.

b. Other summer schools:

Summer school classes from any other school will be evaluated by the administrator or designee and credits accepted shall be equated to the summer high school.

2. Night School

   a. A student who has been unsuccessful in a class may take the course at the evening school, and if successful, receive 1/2 unit of credit. Any competencies required for graduation in such a class must be met.

   b. Night school classes from other than an approved evening school will be evaluated by the administrator or designee, and credit, if granted, shall be equated to those from school.

3. College or University Credits

   a. Prior approval of the administrator or designee must be obtained if credit from a community college, college, or university is to be used for high school credit.

   b. When the course has been completed, the student must submit a transcript to obtain credit.

SAMPLE
POLICY--
OFF-CAMPUS EXPERIENCES

OFF-CAMPUS EXPERIENCES

A. Authority

"The district school board may adopt policies for alternative learning experiences, such as ... credit for off-campus experiences." (OAR 581-22-316(3))

B. Definition

Alternative educational experiences: learning experiences in which the majority of learning is supervised by other than district employes in a setting removed from regular school buildings and grounds, or is self-directed. The experiences shall be part of the school curriculum, and should be described in a specific written agreement which is approved by the parent, school, outside agency, and student.

C. Rationale

The community should be recognized as an extension of the classroom. Involvement in the ongoing activities of diverse business enterprises, community agencies, and other government and private organizations can provide valuable educational experiences for students. Schools should increasingly utilize such resources in designing educational programs appropriate to diverse student needs, interests and abilities.

D. Procedures

1. The building principal or designee shall administer each off-campus program. The principal may appoint an "Alternative Educational Experiences Program Committee" in an advisory role to help coordinate and standardize requirements as well as examine proposals for new programs. The principal shall periodically review each program to assure its relevance and to determine compliance with policy.

2. Alternative educational experiences include:

   a. Enrollment in courses of other educational institutions. (If correspondence courses, the institution must be accredited by the National University Extension Association.)

   b. Training internships in community or government (e.g., National Guard program).

c. Internships or work-training programs in business enterprises.

d. Participation in training or performance groups such as community symphonies, art or science museums.

e. Approved travel or other legitimate student-designed enrichment experiences.

3. In order for credit to be awarded, an alternative educational experience (outside the regular school setting) shall meet the following provisions:

a. Learning activities shall be considered part of the regular school curriculum and standards of quality established by written agreement.

b. The student's activities shall be supervised by a designated person in the participating agency.

c. In approving a student's community internship proposal for credit, consideration shall be given the student's interests, abilities and educational goals.

d. Work-training programs may be either paid or unpaid.

4. Credits

Students may be permitted to earn a maximum of six units of credit in an approved program. Credit shall be granted only when prior written agreement is reached among parents, school, participating agency and student.

Alternative educational experiences in other educational institutions shall be prearranged. Credit will be granted consistent with state guidelines from state accredited colleges. Credit may be granted from non-accredited institutions on a prior written agreement basis.

These experiences may occur at any time during the student's high school career, using the same considerations which affect admission of students to other courses of the school--student interests, abilities, maturity, and goals.

5. Procedures for Enrollment

The availability of alternative educational experiences will be included in forecast materials.

The interested student will be responsible for initiating the contact with the designated faculty member responsible for each program, and following the enrollment procedures as described in each program.

When the student has completed enrollment procedures, a completed form shall be forwarded to the designated faculty member describing: the location, types of activities in which the student will engage, the expected learning outcomes and how they relate to the student's educational goals, the tentative schedule for such activities, and other factors which the district may deem necessary.

The proposal shall be reviewed and the student counseled by the designated faculty member.

If required for the program, the student shall present the proposal to the community agency, arrange any modifications, if necessary, in the proposal, and obtain written approval by the person in that agency who is designated to be the supervisor.

When the proposal is approved by the parent, the community agency, and the school, a copy shall be filed by the designated faculty member and sent to all parties involved in the written agreement.

Experience Validation

The student's progress and ultimately credit and grade for the experience will be evaluated by an appointed faculty member, the community agency (if appropriate), and the student. Credit, grade and competencies met will be recorded on the permanent transcript.

Outside Experience Credit as a Substitute for Required Units

Credit may be granted for required units subject to prior agreement and consistent with normal progress toward meeting competency requirements. It is essential that required competency skills be considered during the planning stages of the alternative educational experience.

Transportation Needs

Whenever possible, students shall be responsible for their own transportation to and from any off-campus learning program. In some instances, the district may choose to provide transportation.

SAIF Insurance Coverage

SAIF coverage shall be provided by the district pursuant to ORS 656.033 if the following conditions are met:

a. The duties performed by the student are:

   - Among those required of similar full-time employes, and
   - Described on the district's application for coverage.

b. The student earns no wages. (If wages are earned, workers' compensation coverage is the responsibility of the participating agency, assuming the Workmen's Compensation Act is applicable.)

c. The student's name and a description of duties have been sent to SAIF. The principal or designee shall be responsible for filing the necessary form at least 5 days prior to the commencement of the student's participation.

SAMPLE
POLICY--CREDIT
BY EXAMINATION

CREDIT BY
EXAMINATION

A. Authority — The district school board may adopt policies for alternative learning experiences, such as credit by examination..." (OAR 581-22-316(3))

B. Definition — Credit by examination: a student is awarded credit for a course, required or elective, due to the student's competence, without having to enroll in the course.

C. Rationale — Providing for individual differences among students results in a wide range of opportunities. Some students are capable of achieving the goals for a particular course without having to enroll or participate in the class.

D. Procedures — Each building principal or designee shall administer this program. The principal may appoint examination screening committees to assist with:

a. Developing examinations, either written or based on observable indicators of competence, which shall clearly demonstrate learner outcomes of the course being challenged.

b. Determining standards of performance on examinations which will be accepted as evidence of satisfactory completion of course requirements.

c. Determining when an appropriate examination has been devised to measure course completion equivalency and when the test shall be used.

d. Establishing examination dates and location.

e. Publishing credit by examination procedures and courses for which credit by examination may be attempted.

f. Reviewing student requests for credit by examination where guidelines are not sufficient.

g. Scoring examinations.

If the student successfully meets or surpasses the performance level established for a course through the process of credit by examination, the student shall be given credit for the course and therefore the enrollment requirement for that course, if any, will be waived. Credit but no grade for the offering will be noted on the transcript and the offering will count toward the graduation requirements both in total units of credit and required course enrollment.

Application for credit by examination:

a. Students must complete an application for credit by examination and submit it to the appropriate department one week prior to the date of the examination. This application shall receive the approval of the student, parent or guardian, and principal or designee.

b. Students may attempt credit by examination for a particular offering no more than two times, and these attempts may not occur within the same semester.

c. Students may not attempt credit by examination for a course in which they are enrolled.

d. Not more than three units of credit may be achieved through credit by examination.

e. A student may not attempt credit by examination for a sequential course below the level at which the student has or is enrolled (i.e., a student may not attempt credit by examination for Algebra I if the student is taking or has taken Algebra II).

APPLICATION FOR CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

Name of Student_____ Graduation Year_____
I am applying for credit by examination in the following course:_____
_____
I feel qualified to challenge the requirements because_____
_____
The purpose of my challenge is_____
_____
Signature of Student_____
Date_____
Name of Department Head_____
Recommendation_____
This application is (approved, disapproved).
Comments_____
_____
_____
Date_____ _____
Signature of Curriculum Vice-Principal

SAMPLE
POLICY--
INDEPENDENT STUDY

INDEPENDENT STUDY

A. Authority — "The district school board may adopt policies for alternative learning experiences, ..." (OAR 581-22-316(3))

B. Definition — Independent Study: a preplanned personal learning experience of at least nine weeks which is designed and outlined by a regularly enrolled student and approved by the principal or designee as appropriate for that individual and valid in its goals, activities, and provisions for evaluation.

C. Rationale — The diverse interests and abilities of students require that learning experiences be personalized. This may entail the provision of enrichment experiences beyond the scope of regular classroom experiences.

It is assumed that a student choosing the alternative of independent study has sufficient maturity and motivation to individually pursue and complete self-initiated study with a minimum of supervision.

D. Procedures — Each building principal or designee shall administer independent study. The principal may appoint a screening committee to assist with:

a. Developing and publishing written procedures and timelines for implementing specified measurable objectives, as well as plans for staff supervision, maintenance of written agreements, and student evaluation.

b. Reviewing requests by students for independent study where guidelines are not sufficient.

c. Reviewing student grievances.

If credit is to be awarded for an independent study program, the student's supervisor shall judge the student's performance acceptable for credit and the student's independent study program shall meet the time requirements established by these guidelines.

Independent study may be conducted on or off the school campus.

Application for independent study:

a. In cooperation with an identified certificated staff member who shall be responsible for the coordination and planning of the student's course work, the student will develop and negotiate a tentative proposal for independent study. In developing the proposal, the student will indicate the types of activities in which the student will engage, the measurable objectives to be achieved, a timeline for the activities, the amount of credit to be granted, the defined evaluation process to be used, and other factors which the school may deem necessary.

b. The proposal shall be reviewed by a faculty member in the subject area department most directly related to the proposal. The reviewer will make recommendations to the principal or designee for approval.

c. Approval shall be granted the proposal only when written agreement between student, parent or guardian, and principal or designee is on file at the school.

Graduation Requirements

581-22-316 Each district school board with jurisdiction over high school programs shall award diplomas to all students who fulfill all school district requirements and all state requirements as described in the following sections and in district school board policies. A school district may award an alternative document to a student who has met some but not all of the graduation requirements.

(1) Unit of Credit Requirements

(a) Each student shall earn a minimum of 21 units of credit to include at least:

(A) Language Arts—3 (shall include the equivalent of 1 unit in Written Composition)
(B) Mathematics—1
(C) Science—1
(D) U.S. History—1
(E) Global Studies—1
(F) Government—1/2
(G) Health Education—1
(H) Physical Education—1
(I) Career Development—1/2
(J) Personal Finance and Economics—1
(K) Applied Arts, Fine Arts or Foreign Language—1 (one unit shall be earned in any one or a combination).

(b) A district school board with a three-year high school may submit through the waiver process alternative plans to meet unit requirements.

(c) A district school board may increase the number of units required in specific areas, and may increase or decrease the number of elective units; however, the total units of credit required for graduation shall not be less than 21.

(d) A school district may grant high school credit for experiences prior to the ninth grade which are equivalent to high school courses within the school district; however, the granting of such credit cannot reduce below 21 the units of credit to be completed in grades 9 through 12.

(e) Planned course statements shall be written for courses in grades 9 through 12 and shall be available to students, staffs, parents, the district school board and other interested individuals.

(2) Competence Requirements

(a) Each student shall demonstrate competence in:

(A) Reading
(B) Writing
(C) Mathematics
(D) Speaking
(E) Listening
(F) Reasoning.

(b) Student competence:

(A) Shall be verified by measurement of student knowledge and skills or measurement of student ability to apply that knowledge and skill;

(B) May be verified through alternative means to meet individualized needs; however, the school district's standard of performance must not be reduced; and

(C) When verified in courses, shall be described in planned course statements; challenge tests and/or other appropriate procedures for verification of competence assigned to courses must also be available.

(c) In developing curriculum and criteria for verification, school districts should be guided by levels of performance required in life roles.

(d) Competence in reading, writing, mathematics, speaking, listening and reasoning shall be recorded on students' high school transcripts. Competence, when verified prior to grade 9, shall be recorded on high school transcripts.

(3) Attendance Requirements

(a) Twelve school years shall be required beginning with grade 1, except when the school district adopts policies providing for early or delayed completion of all state and school district credit and performance requirements.

(b) The district school board may adopt policies for alternative learning experiences, such as credit by examination and credit for off-campus experiences.

(c) With any modification of the attendance requirements for graduation, school district staff shall consider age and maturity of students, access to alternative learning experiences, performance levels, school district guidelines and the wishes of parents or guardians.